CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1293
3 February 1995

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH/SPANISH

LETTER DATED 1 FEBRUARY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT MADE ON BEHALF OF 23 COUNTRIES

I have pleasure in requesting you to arrange for the statement I made on behalf of 23 countries at the opening meeting of the 1995 session of the Conference on Disarmament, on 31 January 1995, to be distributed as an official document of the Conference.

(Signed) Jorge BERGUÑO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Chile
to the Conference on Disarmament

STATEMENT MADE TO THE CONFERENCE BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE ON 31 JANUARY 1995 ON BEHALF OF 23 COUNTRIES

I would like to make the following statement in the name of Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Finland, Iraq, Israel, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

The Conference on Disarmament is, once more, confronted with the need to reach a consensus leading to the expansion of its membership, in order to respond to its own decisions and to the successive resolutions by the United Nations General Assembly demanding a substantial enlargement of its composition.

Now, for the first time, although retaining in the annual resolution on the report of the Conference on Disarmament (resolution 49/77 C) a paragraph urging the Conference to make every effort to reach a solution on the expansion of its membership by the beginning of 1995, the General Assembly has adopted a specific resolution on the issue of expansion (resolution 49/77 B).

The more specific resolution on expansion contains, in its operative paragraphs, terms of reference which, while recognizing the legitimate aspirations of all candidate countries, recommend a significant expansion of the conference's composition which would then include at least 60 countries. In a logical order, the United Nations General Assembly resolution draws attention to the relevant documents intended to guide us in this endeavour:

The report of 12 August 1993 of the Special Coordinator for membership, already acknowledged by the General Assembly since it had been introduced at its forty-eighth session as an integral part of the report of the Conference on Disarmament;

The subsequent statement made by the Special Coordinator on 23 August 1993, recommending a dynamic solution to the question of membership;

The report of the Conference on Disarmament on its 1994 session, reflecting the intention of the Conference to reinstate its own procedures providing for periodic review of its membership.

We are confident that the appropriate procedures will be found to materialize the consensus embodied in the above-mentioned resolutions into a formal decision of the Conference on Disarmament on its composition for the 1995 session.

The completion of this long-delayed process must be achieved with a certain sense of urgency, now, within certain constraints of time that brook no extension. In this context, resolution 49/77B enhances the merits of an enlarged membership, in order to negotiate, on the solid basis of more representative participation, a comprehensive test-ban treaty and other important agreements requiring universal adherence.

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